

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 22, 24, 26 and 29-33 remain in the application.

Claims 1-21, 23, 25, 27-28 were previously canceled.

Claim 22 is in independent form.

35 U.S.C. §103 REJECTIONS

Claims 22, 24, 26 and 29-33 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) over United States Patent No. 3,470,598 to Berthelsen in view of United States Patent No. 5,634,306 to Riegelman. The Office Action indicates that Berthelsen discloses an integral plastic and metal part comprising a metal component (Figure 1, O_R) and having a first opening defining edges (Figure 1, holes on one side of the casing) and a second opening opposite the first opening (Figure 1, the folded edge on the part labeled O_R)(p. 2). The Office Action further indicates that Berthelsen discloses the second opening as defined by a second edge in the metal component, said second edged being folded (Figure 3, E₃), wherein the second opening is the open end of the U which is the same as Applicants' Figure 4 (pp. 2,4). The Office Action further indicates that Berthelsen discloses a plastic component disposed about a portion of the exterior of the metal component (Figure 1, O_B).

The Office Action indicates that Berthelsen fails to disclose a component having a closed cross section defining an interior and an exterior. The Office Action relies upon Riegelman to disclose an integral plastic and metal part having a closed cross section defining an interior and an exterior. The Office Action references Figure 18; col. 9, lines 26-30 and Abstract lines 2-3.

Claim 22 has been amended to recite, inter alia, the second opening be opposite the first opening. Claim 22 also recites that the plastic component not cover the second opening. Thus, as is set forth in the Figures and the written description at, for example, paragraph [0028], the

second opening remains accessible for a core tool (including retraction thereof) even after the molding operation.

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action is not specifically understood. The Office Action refers to Figure 3, component E₃. Respectfully, Figure 3 does not contain a component E₃. Figure 3 is a perspective view illustrating a further stage of processing of the metal strip. E₃ is shown in Figures 1 and 13 in which E₃ is designed to form a stationary part of a structural element. The component E₃ appears to include a u-shaped metal element that is fully encapsulated in plastic and not a metal component having a closed cross-section. To the extent that the Office Action applies that the second opening is the open end of the U, this is inconsistent with the remainder of the Office Action that indicates that it is applying Berthelsen such that the second opening is the folded edge on the part labeled "O_R."

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Berthelsen does not disclose a second opening opposite the first opening as set forth in the present application. The Office Action indicates that Figure 4 is the same as the component E₃. Respectfully, Applicants simply cannot ascertain how the reference is being applied in the Office Action. The reference appears to be applied inconsistently with the Office Action indicating that two separate parts define the second opening. Nonetheless, as best understood, Berthelsen fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 22. As set forth previously, the Berthelsen reference fully covers all of the openings and encapsulates them in plastic. There is no second opening opposite the first in a metal component have a closed cross-section. Rather, Berthelsen reference fully covers all of the openings. As set forth in Berthelsen, the metal component O_R is fully encapsulated in the plastic component. Further, E₃ is a metal component full encapsulated in the plastic component.

Similarly, the Riegelman reference fails to disclose a structure as claimed having a plastic component not covering a second opening. The Office Action relied on the Figure 18 embodiment of Riegelman and associated written description. Applicant also directs the Examiner's attention to the embodiment disclosed, for example, at Figure 41 and the associated written description. However, in no embodiment does Riegelman teach or suggest a second opening for allowing a core tool to be inserted into the interior of the metal component during a molding operation, and wherein the plastic component does not cover the second opening. Rather, in each of Berthelsen and Riegelman, the metal structure is completely encased by the plastic component. Accordingly, neither Berthelsen nor Riegelman render obvious the invention set forth in amended claim 22. More specifically, neither Berthelsen nor Riegelman teach or suggest an integral plastic and metal part with a metal component having a second opening wherein the plastic component does not cover the second opening. There simply is no reason to reconstruct the references in the manner set forth in the Office Action. Such a reconstruction destroys the teaching of the individual references. Further, there would be no reason to modify either of the references to obtain the claimed invention, because such a modification would result in a configuration not sought to be obtained--namely, fully encasing the metal component.

For at least this reason, amended independent claim 22 is allowable over the applied prior art. Claims 24, 26, and 29-33 which ultimately depend from claim 22 are likewise allowable over the applied prior art.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Should Examiner Nordmeyer believe anything further would be desirable in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicant's undersigned attorney at (248) 689-3500 if any unresolved matters remain.


It is believed that any additional fees due with respect to this paper have already been identified. However, if any additional fees are required in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0852 (Reising Ethington Barnes Kisselle PC).

Any needed extension of time is hereby requested with the filing of this document.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 31, 2007

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